

STATE SENATOR • MARK SCHAUER • 19TH DISTRICT

# Schauer Press Release



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
January 11, 2005

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## Schauer Holds Town Hall Meeting on Coping with Winter Heating Costs

*Schauer: Heat versus eat is not a decision we can ask anyone to make.*

LANSING—With high home heating costs straining most family budgets, Sen. Mark Schauer (D-Battle Creek) this evening held a town hall meeting focused on providing homeowners with better ways to cope with escalating home heating expenses. The meeting was held at Burning Brook Center in Battle Creek. He was joined by expert panelists Mike Larson of the Greater Battle Creek Area United Way, William Mabin from Consumers Power, and Marilyn Thomas and Tim Lubbers of Semco Energy.

“Heat versus eat is not a decision we can ask anyone to make,” said Schauer. “We can’t just stick our head in the sand and pretend there isn’t a problem. Struggling families deserve action.”

Following projections by the Michigan Public Service Commission that natural gas heating costs would sky-rocket this winter, Senate and House Democrats established Project WARM or Winter Assistance and Relief in Michigan. The package of bills, awaiting action in the Republican-controlled legislature, attacks the home-heating problem with an assortment of weapons. Highlights of the plan include a ban on winter shut-offs, an emergency fund to pay exorbitant and unexpected bills, strengthening heating assistance programs, and incentives for home weatherization.

“Helping citizens manage this winter’s sky-rocketing home heating costs should be a top priority for any elected official,” said Schauer. “We need to find solutions at all levels of government.”

Senator Schauer also discussed already-existing federal and state cost-mitigation programs and gave out information on managing natural gas consumption.

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*Mark Schauer is the Senate Democratic Floor Leader. He represents the 19<sup>th</sup> Senate District, which includes all of Calhoun County and most of Jackson County.*